

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-32 (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended)

A system for fastening at least two panels a first and a second panel together, said system comprising:

at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles arranged at the edges of a the first panel, and at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles arranged at the edges of a the second panel, wherein mutually oppositely disposed retaining profiles on said first panel complement each other such that said second panel, having similar retaining profiles, can be fastened to said first panel;

said oppositely disposed retaining profiles having complementary hook elements that can be hooked one into the other, said complementary hook elements comprising:

a first hook projection connected to the first panel by a first leg on an upper portion of the edge of said first panel, said first hook projection having an inclined retaining surface, such that said first

hook projection is reduced from its a free end of said
first hook projection towards the first leg; and

a second hook projection connected to the second panel by a second leg on a lower portion of the edge of said second panel, said second hook projection having an inclined retaining surface, such that said second hook projection is reduced from its a free end of said second hook projection towards the second leg, wherein

in an assembled condition the inclined retaining surface of the first hook projection on said first panel bears against the retaining surface of the complementary second hook projection of the second panel to hold said panels first and second panel against each other so as to afford a gap-free floor surface; and

the second hook projection connected to the second panel by the second leg on the lower portion of the edge of the first second panel bears against the first leg connected to the first panel at the upper portion of the second first panel; and

a space is provided between said first hook projection connected to the first panel by the first leg on the upper portion of the edge of the second first panel and the second leg connected to the second panel at the lower portion of the first second panel.

34. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 33 wherein a first retaining profile of the at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles, comprises:

a first hook element formed from the first leg, said first leg projecting approximately perpendicularly from the edge of the first panel and which is arranged at the upper portion of the edge of the panel, and wherein

said first hook projection faces towards the underside of the first panel, and a second retaining profile of the at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles, which is opposite the first retaining profile, comprises:

a second hook element formed from the second leg, said second leg projecting approximately perpendicularly from the opposite edge of the second panel and which is arranged at the lower portion of the edge of the panel, and wherein

said second hook projection faces towards the top side
 of the second panel.

35. (Previously Presented)

 The fastening system according to claim 33 wherein the
 retaining surfaces of the hook projections engage each
 other such that complementary hook projections can be
 hooked one into the other only by elastic deformation.

36. (Currently Amended)

 The fastening system according to claim 35 wherein a
 clearance is provided between the end of the second hook
 projection at the lower portion of the second panel and the
 edge of the first panel and the end of the first hook
 projection at the upper portion of the first panel in the
 assembled condition bears against the second panel at least
 in the region of the upper portion of the edge of the
 second panel.

37. (Previously Presented)

The fastening system according to claim 33 wherein intermediate spaces provided with clearance in the assembled condition of two panels form adhesive pockets.

38. (Previously Presented)

The fastening system according to claim 33 wherein the panels substantially comprise an MDF, HDF, or chipboard material.

39. (Currently Amended)

A system for fastening at least two panels a first and second panel together, said system comprising:

at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles arranged at the edges of a the first panel, and at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles arranged at the edges of a the second panel, wherein mutually oppositely disposed retaining profiles on said first panel complement each other such that said second panel, having similar retaining profiles, can be fastened to said first panel;

said oppositely disposed retaining profiles having complementary hook elements that can be hooked one into the other, said complementary hook elements comprising:

a first hook projection connected to the first panel by a first leg on an upper portion of the edge of said first panel, said first hook projection having an inclined retaining surface, such that said first hook projection is reduced from its a free end of said first hook projection towards the first leg; and

a second hook projection connected to the second panel by a second leg on a lower portion of the edge of said second panel, said second hook projection having an inclined retaining surface, such that said second hook projection is reduced from its a free end of said second hook projection towards the second leg, wherein

in an assembled condition the retaining surface of the first hook projection on said first panel bears against the retaining surface of the complementary second hook projection of the second panel to hold said the first and second panels against each other so as to afford a gap-free floor surface; and

the first hook projection connected to the first panel by the first leg on the upper portion of the edge of the first panel bears against the second leg connected to the second panel at the lower portion of the second panel; and

a space is provided between the second hook projection connected to the second panel by the second leg on the lower portion of the edge of the second panel and the first leg connected to the first panel at the upper portion of the first panel.

40. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein a first retaining profile of the at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles, comprises:

a first hook element formed from the first leg, said first leg projecting approximately perpendicularly from the edge of the first panel and which is arranged at the upper portion of the edge of the panel, and wherein

said first hook projection faces towards the underside of the first panel, and

~~a second retaining profile of the at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles, which is opposite the first retaining profile, comprises:~~

~~a second hook element formed from the second leg, said second leg projecting approximately perpendicularly from the opposite edge of the second panel and which is arranged at the lower portion of the edge of the panel, and wherein~~
~~a second hook projection faces towards the top side of the second panel.~~

41. (Previously Presented)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein the retaining surfaces of the hook projections engage each other such that complementary hook projections can be hooked one into the other only by elastic deformation.

42. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 41 wherein a clearance is provided between the end of the second hook projection at the lower portion of the second panel and the edge of the first panel and the end of the first hook projection at the under portion of the first panel in the assembled condition bears against the second panel at least

in the region of the upper portion of the edge of the second panel.

43. (Previously Presented)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein intermediate spaces provided with clearance in the assembled condition of two panels form adhesive pockets.

44. (Previously Presented)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein the panels substantially comprise an MDF, HDF, or chipboard material.